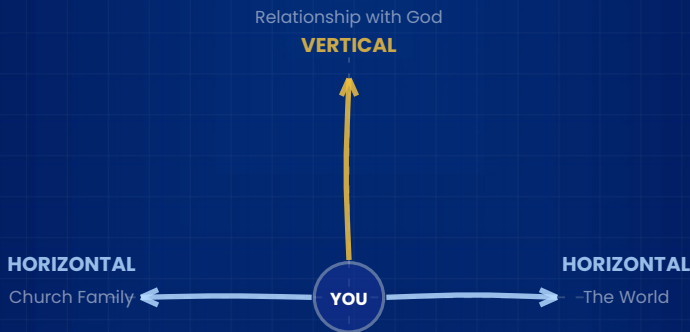


THE NON-NEGOTIABLES

EPISODE 04

THE CHURCH

What is the church – and what are we called to do?



– three non-negotiables of the church –

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APRIL / MAY 2026

HOPE CITY CHURCH

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WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

It's easy to reduce "church" to a building — or a livestream. But the church is neither. Theologically, there are two dimensions:

UNIVERSAL CHURCH

Invisible

Every person who has
accepted Jesus as
Lord and Saviour

LOCAL CHURCH

Visible

Believers gathered in
a given place —
doing life together

The church is NOT the building — it's the people.

□ *Christians: the Bride of Christ, the Body of Christ,
the Family of God — 2.4-2.6 billion worldwide.*

THREE NON-NEGOTIABLES

Synthesizing the New Testament, three non-negotiables emerge for how the church functions — and they are deeply intertwined:

VERTICAL

With God

Worship
& Discipleship

HORIZONTAL

With Christians

Community
& Growth

HORIZONTAL

With the World

Service
& Evangelism

"A new command I give you: Love one another.
By this everyone will know that you are my
disciples, if you love one another."

— **JOHN 13:34-35**

NON-NEGOTIABLE 1: VERTICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Whether individually or gathered together, the church must be engaged in giving of itself to God in worship, and receiving from Him through His Word and Spirit.

WORSHIP (DEFINED)

*"Our response to God in love
for who He is and what He has done."*

– internal devotion · outward expression · active participation

*"Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice,
holy and pleasing to God –
this is your true and proper worship."*

– **ROMANS 12:1**

PRIME EXAMPLE: ACTS 16

Paul and Silas were imprisoned for preaching Jesus. At midnight – in chains – they did the unexpected.

*"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying
and singing hymns to God, and the other
prisoners were listening... Suddenly there
was a great earthquake."*

– **ACTS 16:25–26**

- Out of a moment of worship – God showed up.
The jailer and his whole family gave their lives to Christ.

WORSHIP + DISCIPLESHIP

Worship and discipleship are two sides of one coin. We give ourselves in studying the Bible – and in doing so, we grow in knowing God and have more to offer when we speak of Him to others.

- *The more we study scripture, the more we know the God we serve.*
- *Worship changes us – God is never outdone in generosity.*

NON-NEGOTIABLE 2: HORIZONTAL — THE CHURCH FAMILY

The church is the Body of Christ — and every part is needed. We are called to build each other up so we grow into all that Christ intends.

*"...to equip his people for works of service,
so that the body of Christ may be built up
until we all reach unity in the faith..."*

— EPHESIANS 4:12-13

□ *We need each other. Isolation weakens the body.*

THREE THINGS THE COMMUNITY DOES

PROTECTION

1 Cor. 12:26

If one part suffers,
all suffer with it.
The community rallies.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Heb. 10:24-25

Spur one another on
toward love and
good deeds.

CORRECTION

Gal. 6:1

Restore gently.
Wounds from a friend
can be trusted.

*"As iron sharpens iron,
so one person sharpens another."*

— PROVERBS 27:17

□ *This happens best in deeply rooted relationships.
Small Groups exist to create that space.*

SMALL GROUPS

Protection, Encouragement, and Correction happen best
in deeply rooted community. Find yours.

NON-NEGOTIABLE 3: HORIZONTAL – THE WORLD

The church must expand – sharing Christ's love with everyone. That happens by addressing all forms of poverty: not just physical, but relational, emotional, and spiritual.

PHYSICAL Food, shelter, medicine – visible need in our communities.

RELATIONAL Loneliness, isolation – the poverty of having no one.

EMOTIONAL Anxiety, grief, paralysis – the poverty that medicine cannot reach.

SPIRITUAL Lost in sin, no hope for today or eternity – the deepest poverty.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

— MATTHEW 25:40

- *Spiritual poverty is what we long to fill – it impacts eternity.*
- *But the other forms of poverty demand our response too.*

THE REAL QUESTION

Not just: "Do I go to church?" – but...

"Am I the church?"

- *Vertical: Are you growing in worship and discipleship?*
- *Horizontal: Are you investing in the church family?*
- *Outward: Are you reaching those outside the faith?*

These three are non-negotiable.

THE NON-NEGOTIABLES

Foundations of the Christian Faith

EPISODE 04: THE CHURCH

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EP 05 The Final Judgement

EP 06 More to Come...

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